

REMARKS:

I. Introduction

In the Office Action mailed on August 12, 2005, the Examiner allowed claims 11 to 20, rejected claims 1 to 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9, and objected to claims 4, 7, and 9. The present amendment cancels claims 3 and 4, amends claims 1, 7, and 9, and adds no new claims. Accordingly, claims 1, 2 and 5 to 20 are now pending in this application.

II. Claim Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Estes (US 4,833,299).

Independent claim 1 and claims dependent therefrom are allowable because they include the limitations of original claims 3 and 4. It is noted that the Examiner indicated claim 4 to be allowable if rewritten into independent form. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

III. Claim Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

(a) The Examiner rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Estes (US 4,833,299) in view of Coultas (US 5,197,595).

Claim 3 is allowable as depending from allowable claim 1 as described above and independently allowable for novel and nonobvious matter contained therein. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

(b) The Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Estes

(US 4,833,299) in view of Beck et al. (US 6,025,576).

Claim 5 is allowable as depending from allowable claim 1 as described above and independently allowable for novel and nonobvious matter contained therein. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

(c) The Examiner rejected claims 8 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Estes (US 4,833,299) in view of Boyd (US 5,974,820) or Taylor (US 5,931,342).

Claims 8 and 9 allowable as depending from allowable claim 1 as described above and independently allowable for novel and nonobvious matter contained therein. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

IV. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiners objected to claims 4, 7, and 10 as being dependent on a rejected base claim but indicated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten into independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As discussed above, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 4 and intervening claim 3. Claims 7 and 10 have been rewritten into independent form including all of the limitations of original claim 1. It is noted that original claims 7 and 10 had no intervening claims. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection is requested.

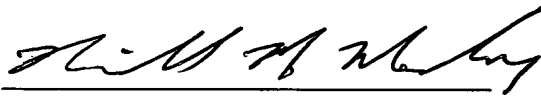
Applicants acknowledge that the Examiner has allowed claims 11 to 20.

V. CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is found that that the present amendment does not place the application in a condition for allowance, applicant's undersigned attorney requests that the examiner initiate a telephone interview to expedite prosecution of the application.

If there are any fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-2326.

Respectfully submitted,



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August 18, 2005